

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

- 1 1. A method of tracking hits for a network file comprising the steps of:
2 receiving a request for said network file from a requesting
3 device;
4 sending said network file to said requesting device in response
5 to said request, said network file including an instruction to transmit an
6 indicator subsequent to said requesting device receiving said network file;
7 transmitting said indicator from said requesting device in
8 response to receiving said network file; and
9 processing said indicator to track said hits for said network file.
- 1 2. The method of claim 1 wherein receiving said request includes
2 receiving said request over the global communications network referred to as
3 the Internet.
- 1 3. The method of claim 1 further comprising a step of including a network
2 address of said requested network file within said indicator, so that said
3 indicator can be identified as corresponding to said requested network file.
- 1 4. The method of claim 1 further comprising a step of including a network
2 address of a remote processor within said instruction for navigating said
3 indicator from said requesting device over a network to said remote
4 processor, so that said indicator can be processed.
- 1 5. The method of claim 1 further comprising a step of executing said
2 instruction to transmit said indicator by an end-user browser at said
3 requesting device.
- 1 6. The method of claim 1 further comprising a step of generating said
2 request for said network file at said requesting device.

1 7. The method of claim 1 further comprising a step of embedding said
2 instruction within said network file, such that said instruction is transparent to
3 an end-user at said requesting device.

1 8. The method of claim 1 wherein processing said indicator includes
2 counting said indicator for updating a tally of said hits for said network file.

1 9. The method of claim 1 wherein receiving said request for said network
2 file includes receiving said request at a proxy, said proxy having cache
3 memory to service said request when said cache memory includes a cached
4 copy of said requested network file, said cached copy having said instruction
5 for transmitting said indicator from said requesting device subsequent to said
6 requesting device receiving said cached copy.

1 10. The method of claim 1 further comprising a step of providing said
2 instruction as programming that is compatible with JavaScript.

1 11. The method of claim 1 further comprising a step of providing said
2 network file to include at least one of text information, image information,
3 audio information and video information.

1 12. A method of counting a number of accesses for cachable documents
2 comprising the steps of:
3 embedding executable code in each of a plurality of said
4 cachable documents, said executable code being associated with triggering
5 transmissions of count-inducing messages from clients;
6 sending said cachable documents to said clients in response to
7 requests made by said clients;
8 receiving said count-inducing messages transmitted from said
9 clients as responses to said executable code; and
10 counting said accesses on a basis of receiving said count-
11 inducing messages.

1 13. The method of claim 12 wherein receiving said count-inducing
2 messages includes receiving one of said count-inducing messages for each
3 said cachable document received by said clients.

1 14. The method of claim 12 further comprising a step of storing said
2 cachable documents in Web proxies, said Web proxies being in communica-
3 tion with said clients and at least one originating server via the Internet, said
4 Web proxies being configured to store said cachable documents that are
5 downloaded from said originating server.

1 15. The method of claim 14 further comprising a step of implementing said
2 executable code by browser software of said clients, such that said count-
3 inducing messages are transmitted from said clients.

1 16. The method of claim 14 further comprising a step of providing a
2 Universal Resource Locator (URL) of a processor in said executable code to
3 enable transmitting of said count-inducing messages from said browser
4 software to said processor, said processor being operationally associated with
5 said originating server.

1 17. A system for tracking hits over the Internet comprising:
2 a store of plurality of network files, each of said network files
3 having a command to initiate a transmission of an identifier from any of a
4 plurality of clients upon a receipt of one of said network files by said clients;
5 programming accessible via of said client, said programming
6 being configured to request said network files; and
7 a file access counter responsive to receiving said identifiers
8 from clients as a basis for counting transfers of said network files to said
9 clients.

1 18. The system of claim 17 wherein said command includes program-
2 mable code embedded within each said network file, said programmable code
3 being configured to execute said transmissions of said identifiers upon said
4 receipt of said network files by said client.

1 19. The system of claim 18 wherein said programmable code includes an
2 Internet address of said file access counter, said network files including World
3 Wide Web pages.

1 20. The system of claim 17 wherein said network files include cached
2 copies of Internet files, said store of network files being a proxy Web server.